

L O U N G E R.

[N^o LIII.]

Saturday, Feb. 4. 1786.

Minima contentos nocte Britannos.

JUV.

I N a late Paper, I laid before my Readers a letter from a correspondent, subscribing himself *Senex*, on the little attention which is now-a-days paid to the rights and jurisdiction of Time. I have since that received the following application from a personage who claims my attention and regard, by desiring me to observe, that she is still older than *Senex*, and has had more opportunities of witnessing that corruption of modern manners, of which he so warmly complains.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

The HUMBLE PETITION of NIGHT.

Sheweth,

THAT from the remotest antiquity your Petitioner was acknowledged and understood to have right to the undisturbed possession of silence and quiet, and, in company with her relation *Darkness*, was invested with the power of staying the works and labours of men, and of consigning them to the dominion of your Petitioner's ancient and approved ally *Sleep*. *Sleep* in his turn yielded them to the renewed power of *Day*, to whom was committed the charge of their active employments. That this regular distribution of Time was agreeable to the laws of Nature, and highly conducive to the interests of society and the welfare of individuals.

That, this notwithstanding, your Petitioner has to complain, that for a considerable time past, in civilized and polite nations, there have been many violent and unjust inroads made into that province which in the order of Nature has been assigned her. That in the metropolis of the British empire, in particular, the distinguishing privileges above set forth, to which the Petitioner conceives herself well intitled, have been violently infringed, in-

ſomuch that the hours over which ſhe and her associates above named ought to have had command and controul, have been almoſt entirely appropriated to action, buſtle, and diſquiet, to the great diſturbance of your ſaid Petitioner and her friends before mentioned.

That certain perſons, aſſuming to themſelves the ſtyle and title of Men of Pleaſure, had long ſince a licence of acting in their ſeveral occupations in deſpite of your Petitioner's excluſive privileges herein-before recited; and being confederated with the powers of wine, play, and other diſorderly associates, had made forcible entries into the territories of your Petitioner, and ſubjected her faithful vaſſals to much vexation and annoyance. But as thoſe men of pleaſure were in ſome ſort acknowledged to be independent of Reaſon and Nature, from whom your Petitioner holds in fief, ſhe was contented to paſs over their enormities for the preſent; being aſſured, from very great and reſpectable authority, that moſt of thoſe perſons would, at a future period, be particularly conſigned to her power and dominion.

But of late your Petitioner has obſerved, with the greateſt alarm, that perſons of buſineſs, and even thoſe from whoſe high ſanction ſuch irregular proceedings will be moſt apt to come into example and precedent, have made very unwarrantable encroachments on her moſt acknowledged and determinate boundaries. Such perſons, in order to conceal the injuries done by them to your Petitioner, have added the crime of falſehood and forgery to their other offences; and have marked their proceedings, as if carried on under the ſanction of Day, with the Latin words, “ Die Martis,”—“ Die Jovis,”—and ſo forth; though it is an undoubted fact, and can be proved by the moſt indiſputable authority, that theſe were tranſacted within the juriſdiction and precincts of your Petitioner. Some of the perſons indeed chiefly and principally concerned in ſuch tranſactions, were frequently obſerved to have in ſome ſort allowed the authority of your Petitioner, by ſubmitting to the controul and dominion of Sleep, her well known and faithful associate above mentioned.

That your petitioner, amidſt all thoſe injuries which ſhe ſuffered, had yet the conſolation of thinking that they were chiefly confined to the city of London and liberties of Weſtminſter; but that in the country, and the metropolis of this ancient kingdom of Scotland, her proper and juſt rights were more acknowledged and attended to; and that there, associations both of buſineſs and amuſement generally preſerved a certain degree of reſpect for her dominion, and did not wantonly and violently encroach upon her boundaries.

boundaries. But within these few years she has seen, with equal surprise and regret, a remarkable alteration in this matter; and that in particular the last mentioned persons, the partizans and followers of amusement in this city, never begin their course of action till that period arrives, which, by the original charter of your Petitioner, was granted to her and her fellow proprietors herein before particularly enumerated.

That your petitioner is not hardy enough to imagine, that she can prevail on those persons to relinquish the encroachments herein complained of. She is willing, therefore, for the sake of peace, to which she has always had a strong propensity, to give up such a portion of her territory and domain, as to accommodate them in their avocations and employments, provided she shall be ascertained in certain limits, to be henceforward observed without infringement; and she submits to you, on behalf of herself and her sister *Day*, the under-written propositions on the subject. They contain a new Table of Time, to be observed by the polite and fashionable classes only, reserving to the good folks in the country, and the lower orders of mankind, their ancient and accustomed reckoning.

It is proposed then,

1st, That the year in Edinburgh shall commence from the 18th day of January, and shall end and determine the 18th of April. The lesser divisions of time, called months and weeks, to be no wise affected or affectable by such abridged computation of the year or season; except that, among the higher ranks and orders of the people, for whom this new computation is intended, the space commonly known by the title of *Honey-Moon*, shall be shortened in proportion to the comparative duration of this newly-computed year, and of that formerly established and observed.

2^d, That the Day shall begin at the hour of two in what is now called the Afternoon, and end at six in what is vulgarly called the Morning; the space between the latter hour and the former to appertain and belong to your Petitioner.

3^d, Day agrees to cede to your Petitioner the Sun, and its various appendages; your Petitioner, on her part, guarantees to her sister Day the Moon, with all its properties and appurtenances whatsoever.

4th, Day agrees, that notwithstanding the cession contained in the immediately preceding article, your Petitioner may continue her amnesty to all those little irregularities which were formerly covered by her shade, and which she may in this period now settled happen to witness; because the fashionable circle,

to

to which only this new kalendar applies, is above being ashamed of such practices, and can let the sun look on them without blushing.

5th, During the period of this newly-settled year, which is too short to allow any interruption in its course, your Petitioner's ally Rest gives up her ancient claim to every seventh day: on which seventh day therefore every fashionable employment, business, or diversion, may be carried on as usual; any such ancient claim, law, or commandment, in any wise notwithstanding. Proviso, That such concession shall not bar people from sleeping in church on that day.

Your Petitioner humbly requests, That you will be pleased to take the premises into your consideration; and, on behalf of her and her sister Day, accede to the proposals above set forth, as well as publish them for the consent and concurrence of the polite world in this part of the kingdom.

N I G H T.

The Lounger has received a paper signed A. B. containing animadversions on two letters inserted some time ago, under the signatures of *Penelope Feeble* and *Jonathan Morose*. Without entering so much at large into the merits of the two characters of *Feeble* and *Morose*, as the Author of that paper has done, I own I am inclined to be of his opinion, that, even as they are represented by Mr Morose himself, they resemble one another more nearly than that gentleman may perhaps be disposed to allow. Both wish to attain the same end, though by different means; both have the same propensity to *soak* up the countenance of the great, as Hamlet calls it; though Feeble may soak it up like a lump of sugar, and Morose like a brown crust; or, according to my correspondent A. B.'s simile, which, though somewhat coarse, is extremely apposite, "Mr Morose should recollect the homely fable of the *Pot* and the *Kettle*; both kitchen-utensils, and equally standing "in need of a thorough scouring."

E D I N B U R G H :

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Next Saturday will be published N^o LIV.